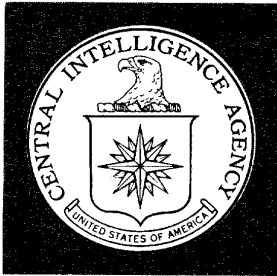


~~SENSITIVE~~

CIA/SAVA / WVIND 701031



WEEKLY VIETNAM INDICATORS

Week Ending 31 October 1970

NSA Declassification/Release Instructions on File.

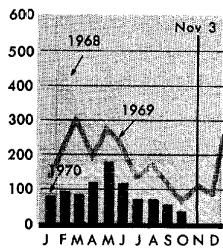
For the President Only

~~Top Secret~~

SOUTH VIETNAM WEEKLY INDICATORS

1968-1970

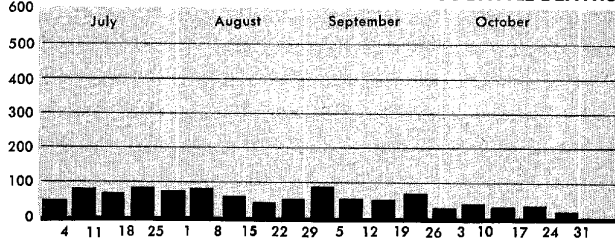
Weekly average for each month



JULY-OCTOBER 1970

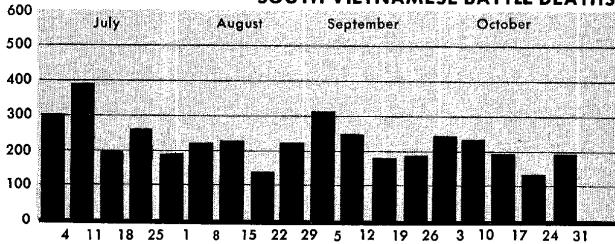
Weekly data as reported

US BATTLE DEATHS



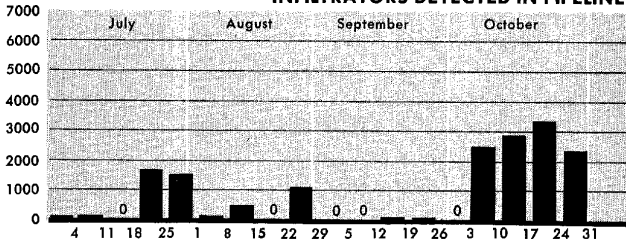
dropped to a new low of 27 from last week's 42.

SOUTH VIETNAMESE BATTLE DEATHS



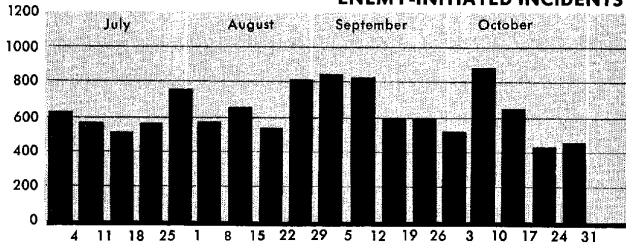
rose to 194 from last week's 145. The official total will change as late reports are received and will be lower than the figures released to the press by the GVN.

INFILTRATORS DETECTED IN PIPELINE



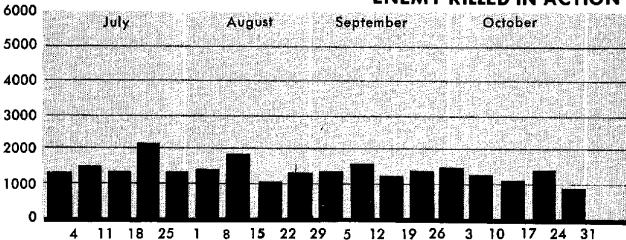
stand at five battalion-size groups with a combined strength of 2,400. The total number of infiltrators since 1 October 1970 is estimated to be some 11,000 - 12,000.

ENEMY-INITIATED INCIDENTS



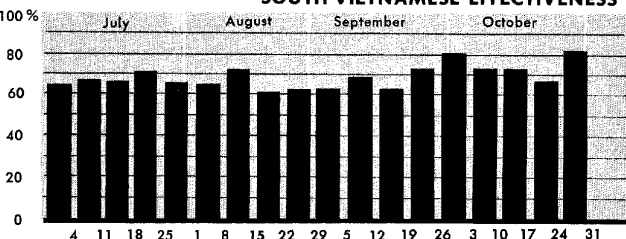
remained at a low level as 476 were reported versus last week's 423.

ENEMY KILLED IN ACTION



sharply decreased to 909 from the 1,484 of last week.

SOUTH VIETNAMESE EFFECTIVENESS



as measured by the percentage of enemy killed by GVN forces increased to 83% from last week's 67%.

Statistics for the latest week shown are preliminary

FOR THE PRESIDENT ONLY

Enemy Activity

Throughout South Vietnam, enemy activity remained at a reduced level, though in the Delta there was a slight increase in attacks by fire and ground probes against isolated outposts. In the northern provinces (MR 1), heavy rains and flooding have severely limited activity by both sides.

In north Laos, government irregulars continued to consolidate their newly won holdings southwest and west of the Plain of Jars but were forced from their important forward positions at Phou Seu overlooking the Plain. Control of this high ground puts the Communists in a better position to challenge the government's hold on Ban Na and Muong Pot -- the outposts guarding the approaches to Vang Pao's headquarters at Long Tieng. Meanwhile to the south, government forces fared better as irregulars successfully overran the Pathet Lao headquarters for Savannakhet Province and large stores of materiel stockpiled in the complex were destroyed. Additionally, interdiction teams are once again en route to disrupt enemy supply lines running through the Panhandle.

Enemy-initiated activity in Cambodia continued at a slow pace, characterized by small-scale harassment of scattered government positions. No significant Communist ground assaults have been launched since late August. Southeast of Phnom Penh, the government's search and clear operation continued with some success as the Communists seemed bent on avoiding contact.

Enemy Infiltration

Five battalion-size groups were detected during the past week with a combined strength of 2,400. This raises the total number of infiltrators destined for South Vietnam/Cambodia since 1 October 1970 to an estimated 11,000 - 12,000, the highest monthly total since February 1970 and the highest figure ever recorded for the month of October. While some 90% of the groups detected during this month are destined for COSVN, several COSVN-controlled units are currently operating in Cambodia, and substantial numbers of these COSVN-designated infiltrators are probably scheduled for use in Cambodia instead of South Vietnam.

Communist logistics authorities in southern North Vietnam and Laos have reported considerable flood damage resulting in disruption and delay in the southward movement of men and materiel. The peak of the flooding has passed, however, and movement should increase during November as the Communists complete repairs to the roads and bend greater efforts to strengthening their logistical elements in the system and moving supplies through it.

South Vietnam Developments

The proposed GVN political initiative presented by Vice President Ky, which he wants to discuss with President Nixon during his November visit to the U.S., represents a considerable advance in the GVN position but in its totality is not likely to be attractive to the Communists. Ky's proposal calls for a 5-step program: (1) an immediate ceasefire; (2) discussion of the modalities of foreign troop withdrawal; (3) legalizing the status of the Viet Cong to permit them to organize as a political party; (4) elections for a constituent assembly which would draft a new constitution and establish procedures for a general election; and (5) general elections. While the Communists would welcome the abandonment of the present constitution and the legalization of the Communist movement, they would still insist upon their key demand: that the Thieu/Ky/Khiem regime be eliminated and a coalition government be formed prior to any elections. Nevertheless, as Ky contends, the proposal would probably have a favorable international impact and put the Communist side on the defensive.

President Thieu is planning an early reshuffle of his cabinet, possibly by the middle of November. According to Presidential Secretary Nha, the changes will not be aimed at broadening the government but at improving the effectiveness of the administration. The ministers of education, health, information and ethnic minorities are possible casualties, but Prime Minister Khiem will be retained.

Communist Developments

Le Duc Tho held out little hope for any immediate progress in the peace talks in discussions with two Look magazine editors in late October. He rebuffed the editors' efforts to find common ground in the U.S. and Communist proposals and showed flexibility only on the timing of U.S. troop withdrawals. Tho adamantly opposed any settlement that included the present Saigon government. Tho said he had no immediate plans to return to Paris. In the past, Tho has always been on the scene in Paris whenever the Communists have made any of their limited substantive moves at the talks.

Although it is now two years since the halt of the bombing, North Vietnam's economy has not yet been restored to pre-bombing levels of output. Rice production this year, despite new, higher yielding strains, will still fall short of the 1965 crop, and 1970 food imports to date have declined only slightly from the levels of a year ago. Rehabilitation of the war-damaged industrial sector has been slow and even the high priority power network is operating at only about two-thirds of pre-bombing capacity. While government leaders place the blame on inferior management and poor labor utilization, the demands of the war effort have probably been a major factor in the poor progress.

Hanoi appears to be engaged in a countrywide, high-priority drive to expand its armed forces. The regime called for a build-up of the home guard and the regular army last summer, and regional and national authorities have subsequently been meeting throughout North Vietnam to implement accelerated conscription and recruitment. Press statements convey a sense of urgency about the mobilization which appears to be both for short and long-range requirements for the war. If the draft is as extensive as suggested by the press items, it is likely to be reflected in a high rate of infiltration in the coming months.

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